

**ABSTRACT****MULTI-HOP LOAD BALANCING**

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A base station in a wireless communications system defines a plurality of beams which each have an amount of resources for supporting communication links with terminals. A control entity determines if a direct communication link can be supported between a new terminal and a base station using a first beam. If a  
10 direct communication link cannot be supported, a relaying equipment is used to provide a multi-hop path between the base station and the terminal. The multi-hop path comprises a link between the base station and the relaying equipment using resources of a different beam. This helps to redistribute load within the cell. The direct communication link can be refused if there are insufficient resources in  
15 the first beam, or if accepting the new terminal would cause quality of communication links with existing terminals to deteriorate.

**[Figure 5]**